



August 23, 2006

Dear Community Friends

Summertime Burglaries

As we entered the warm weather months, I wrote these words in a June newsletter:

"We often see an increase in residential burglary and theft in the warm weather months. At times, we leave our windows open for ventilation when we are not home. In a vast number of summertime burglaries, the burglar gains entry through an opened or unlocked door or window."

Looking at the increase in residential burglaries we've experienced over the summer, one thing stands out: in the vast majority of burglaries, the burglars gained entry through opened windows. Some removed items from opened garages. This is one instance where I really wish I didn't have the data backing me up when I say, "I told you so."

I have received calls from many south end residents who want to start block watches because of increased burglaries. I've received angry missives because someone was a victim of a crime. I've been peppered with calls and emails from people wanting to know what the police department is doing about the increase in burglaries. I have two basic questions:

- 1) Did you report it? You'd be surprised how often the response is "no."
- 2) How did the burglar gain entry? See above.

I am more than happy to help people get a block watch started. After all, it really is about connecting with neighbors, agreeing to watch out for each other and communicating with each other and police about suspicious activity. I am also more than willing to address people's concerns about area crime and police response. Working with neighbors to explore strategies to address criminal behaviors and other public safety concerns is what I do.

However, when armed with the information that a large number of burglars gain entry through an open window, and people still leave their windows open when away from home, and then are angry at the police because they were burglarized, I have to shake my head and wonder what else we need to do to get the point across before the burglary occurs.

I may be the preacher and you the choir, but I will continue to stress this point and ask you do the same: most crimes are crime of opportunity; you reduce the opportunity, you reduce your probability of becoming a crime victim.

Lock your doors and windows when you leave home. Don't present an easy opportunity for someone to gain entry to your home or remove items from your garage.

Please, don't hand me another "I told you so" moment.

Othello Park Update

Over the past several months, members of the Othello Park community have been working with the Parks Department to put together positive, family friendly programming for the park. The intent behind this is that if we want to drive out the negative criminal behaviors at the park, we need to replace them with positive community focused activities. The Parks Department hired a special activities coordinator who is focused on bringing positive community activities to Othello Park and John C Little Sr. Park (in the New Holly area).

To that end, there are a series of community concerts that are planned for Othello Park over the coming months. Attached with this newsletter is a list of dates, a call for community participation (including performers and volunteers) and contact information for those who wish to become involved.

Until Next Time, Take Care and Stay Safe!

Mark Solomon South Precinct Crime Prevention

Save the Date!! Save the Date!! Save the Date!! Save the Date!! Save the Date!!

Othello Park Concerts 2006

Sundays, September 10, 17, 24, and October 1

- WHAT:** Concerts in Othello Park embracing a range of musical styles and cultures in the community.
- WHEN:** The concerts start at 1 p.m. and last until 6:30 p.m. each day.
- WHERE:** The concerts will take place in Othello Park, 4351 S. Othello St., in Southeast Seattle (S. Othello St. at 45th Ave. S.)
- WHY:** To have fun, and enjoy music and community. The concerts are free, and are suitable for all ages and families.
- AMENITIES:** Othello Park has a children's playground with swings and climbing structures, and bathrooms and a drinking fountain. Othello Park is served by Metro Routes # 42, 48, and 106, and the # 7 runs nearby. There are plenty of shade trees. Bring a blanket or lawn chairs, a picnic lunch, and enjoy!

We Need Your Help!!

Musicians/Performers: We are seeking performers. Compensation (payment/stipend) is available. There will be 16 time slots for one hour long musical performances, and 12 short time slots (20 minutes) for other performances such as dance troupes, drill teams, poetry/slam performances, and short theatre skits or sketches. Professional performers, community and amateur performers, and youth performers are all welcome and encouraged. Please get in touch with the contact person listed below for a submission form.

Children's Activities: We are seeking volunteers for children's programming. We want to offer limited, age-appropriate activities for three age ranges: 6 and younger, 6 – 12 years old, and 12 and older. A community organization has committed to providing volunteers and coordination for these activities at one of the concerts; we hope that other organizations and volunteers will step forward to help provide these activities for the other concerts. Please get in touch with the contact person listed below for more information or to volunteer.

Volunteers: We are seeking volunteers to help set up and take down the equipment on the days of the events. This involves about 90 minutes of time EITHER from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. OR from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on each concert day. Tasks include setting up or taking down "pop-up" canopy tents, setting up or putting away folding tables and chairs, and picking up litter. Please get in touch with the contact person listed below for more information or to volunteer.

Sponsors: We are seeking a few final donations to complete the funding needed to ensure the concerts are a great success. Please consider joining **Seattle Weed and Seed**, **Mt. Baker Housing Association**, **HomeSight**, **SouthEast Effective Development**, and **Seattle Parks and Recreation** in making these concerts possible. Please get in touch with the contact person listed below for more information.

Contact Person: Randy Wiger, Seattle Parks and Recreation, **206-684-0775** or **randy.wiger@seattle.gov**